

FULCRUM



'SoapBox'

Editor, FULCRUM, Comrade:

The slaves at work are all twittering about the NDP victory in Manitoba. They all expect to live high off the hog now. That cartoon on the SS cover sums it up in a nutshell -- 'choose any flavour you like' but the brew is the same capitalist brew no matter which flavor button you press. I exchanged words with an ardent DDP'er who pointed out that the NDP were responsible in cutting the ferry charges from Vancouver in half. Is this correct?

Socialist greetings to all the comrades in Victoria.

Anne Cherkes, Winnipeg

ON THE COVER

This issue of the FULCRUM was to be devoted to the working class stalwarts who 50 years ago fought the working class battle in the Winnipeg General Strike. Particular tribute is paid to W.H. Richardson who was then a member of the Socialist Party of Canada. Even today at the age of 81 still plays a vital part in the expansion of Socialist education.

In paying such a tribute it is realized, of course, that FULCRUM risks being charged of stooping to the cult of personality. Nevertheless Fulcrum takes the risk on the ground that those who have foregone the often sought after pecuniary reward deserve the recognition and appreciation of the working class they so capably and unstintingly served.

Just as Fulcrum was about to go to press Capitalism slaughtered another worker. In Vancouver a striking oil worker was run over by a strike breaker.

So it is that the circumstances of Capitalism caused this issue to be expanded to embrace today's martyrs and though Bill Johnson was the artist it was, in a sense, capitalism that drew the cover.

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REPLY:

Socialists are quite used to NDP mental gymnastics, but it is difficult to understand how they jumble the facts to get this one. Here are the facts unscrambled:

1. The old C.P.R. ferry was about \$4.60. The trip took about $4\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

2. The B.C. Ferries fare is \$2.00. The boat trip is 1 hr 40 min. There appears to be considerable saving in both time and money, unless someone is unkind enough to point out that the B.C. Ferries travel between Tsawassen and Swartz Bay which are some distance from Vancouver and Victoria. With the necessary bus trip the fare becomes \$4.25 and the time $3\frac{1}{4}$ hrs. This somewhat shatters any illusions about half price.

The next rather unkind fact is that the NDP have never been the government of B.C. Any of the typical NDP chatter about their pressure forcing the government to act should quickly put aside. The Socreds have a firm majority and are quite arrogant. There was pressure alright but it came not from the NDP but from the needs of B.C. capitalism. NDP miracles, like bowing statues the further away one is the easier it is to pedal them. As one looks closer without the sun of idealism shining in his eyes the more undified the NDP become.

of

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FROM HORSES HOOFs TO TRUCK WHEELS

Larry Tickner

Victoria Local, S.P.C.

FIFTY YEARS OF PROGRESS

"On Saturday ---- Main Street...They quickened pace as they passed the Union Bank. The crowd opened, let them through and closed in behind them. They turned and charged through the crowd again, greeted by hisses, boos and some stones. There were two riderless horses with the squad when it emerged and galloped up Main Street. The men in khaki disappeared at this juncture, but the red-coats reined their horses and re-formed opposite the old post office. Then, with revolvers drawn, they galloped down Main Street, turned and charged right into the crowd...firing as they charged. One man standing on a sidewalk, thought the Mounties were firing blank cartridges until a spectator standing beside him dropped with a bullet through his breast. Another standing nearby was shot through the head." (1)

The scene was not Nazi Germany, Fascist Spain or Italy. It did not happen in so-called Communist Russia. It occurred in what was alleged to be a safe harbor of freedom and democracy. It happened in Canada in Winnipeg a short 50 years ago.

The events that led to the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 were low wages, long hours and high prices which had endured through the 1914 - 1918 World War and the predictable Post-War Depression.

"Wages as low as ten cents per hour for apprentices and the ten hour day were included in the conditions the workers endured. Speed up, firings, insecurity and sweatshop conditions added to the bag of discontent. ... The Metal Trades Council pointed out that while the cost of living had increased by 75% over that of 1913, the increase in earnings was only 18% in the same period. The average construction worker earned approximately \$915. per year and studies showed that the minimum requirement to keep a family of five on the basis of Winnipeg prices was \$1,503." (2)

And what of those workers who for four years had served in the blood bath of overseas capitalist competition? Wind and blood, the munitions profiteers that produced the practically useless Ross Rifle, cardboard soled boots, all these things contributed to expose for all but the most moronic or obsequious returned soldiers the natural alienation to their capitalist masters.

The capitalist class further demonstrated their tyranny and hysteria by having their (Federal) government enact censorship forbidding anyone to have in his possession hundreds of publications, amongst which were Darwin's ORIGIN of the SPECIES, the works of Karl Marx and even the Savoy Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan. The maximum penalty for possessing these classics? 20 YEARS IN THE PENTITENTIARY.

Contrasted with the hysterical fanaticism of the capitalist class was the peaceful orderliness of the Winnipeg Strike Committee. Conscious of peoples needs they ensured that necessary services such as food and medical care were maintained.

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(1) INFORMATION - May 1969, Page 25 (Journal, United Steelworkers of America, 1901 Yonge St., Toronto, Ontario).

(2) INFORMATION - May 1969, Page 5.

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FROM HORSES HOOFs TO TRUCK WHEELS (continued)

and despite a majority vote in favor of a walkout the Strike committee persuaded the city police to return to their jobs.

After the murderous assault by capitalism's professional thugs, the state struck with in its old familiar style. Worker's homes were broken into in Gestapo fashion, books ~~ceremoniously~~ wrenched from the shelves, workers indicted, tried and convicted. Convicted of seditious conspiracy and common nuisance:

R.B. Russell: (only actual member of strike committee convicted). O.B.U. (3.); Secretary District 2 Machinist's Union; Socialist Party of Canada--2 years in the penitentiary.

John Queen: Labour Alderman; Advertising manager, Western Labour News--1 year Stoney Mountain Prison.

Wm. Ivens: Methodist minister; Founder Winnipeg Labor Church; Editor, Western Labor News--1 year Stoney Mountain Prison.

George Armstrong: Organizer, Carpenters and Joiners; Socialist Party of Canada--1 year Stoney Mountain Prison.

W.A. Pritchard: Longshoreman; O.B.U. Vice-President, Vancouver Trades and Labor Council; Socialist Party of Canada; delegated to enquire about possible Vancouver Trade Labour Council assistance for Strike.--1 year Stoney Mountain Prison.

R.J. Johns: Machinist Union representative, away from Winnipeg on Union business for duration of Strike--1 year, Stoney Mountain Prison

These men emerged as labor heroes. Some came right out of prison into elected positions, but the real fruit of their efforts was the establishment of union recognition and the establishment of the principle of collective bargaining.

Union recognition and collective bargaining was regarded as a great victory by many. But now after 50 years where has it brought us? On August 26th, 1969 in Vancouver, B.C., a strike breaker drove down and killed, oil worker, James Gordon Harvey on the picket line.

Fifty years ago mounties and hired thugs clubbed and shot at strikers. Today the law protects the scabs going through picket lines to break strikes. Struggling like a hobbled mule, unionists cry for alterations in labor laws or even a new government. What labor has not yet learned is that in a class divided society, contrary to their illusions, the function of the state is to serve the capitalist class. This fact is not appreciably altered by changes in law or in a new government. If the working class are ever to arrive at a situation of social harmony they will have to bring about a fundamental change in society. This change can only arrive once they recognize the hostage and ransom relationship within which the productive forces are held. Mankind will not be free until it owns, controls and administers the means of its existence.

(3.) O.B.U. - One Big Union. Many workers belonged to the O.B.U. as well as international unions and did not consider it incompatible.

ERNIE'S YOUTHFUL IDEALISM SHATTERED

"When the election was called I almost automatically went to the aid of the N.D.P. Then I looked around. In every direction there were lawyer, real estate sharks and business men. I said to myself, 'What the hell am I doing here?' And I got to hell out of there. I didn't even vote for them."

"IDEOLOGY"

Bill Pritchard

Los Angeles

"...the ULTIMATE subjugation of the oppressed occurs in the IDEOLOGICAL OR CULTURAL realm; a social system can maintain its REPRESSIVE EFFECTIVENESS ONLY SO LONG AS THE OPPRESSED SHARE THE FUNDAMENTAL ETHOS of the oppressors." (Antonio Gramsci) (1.)

"The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class." (Marx-Engels).

These two quotations carry the same implication: a ruling class maintains its position by imposing on, or imparting to, its oppressed those ideas which reflect, or are in keeping with, the material interest of the rulers. Contemporary society provides overwhelming evidence of this.

The predatory activities of the capitalist powers today, armed with the most sophisticated weaponry for wholesale destruction, seeking new spheres of influence, trade routes, sources of raw materials, etc., or, conversely, trying to prevent their rivals from access thereto, is now painfully evident, as witness the imperialistic adventures of the U.S., in S.E. Asia, Santo Domingo, and elsewhere.

Witness also - and for the same basic material considerations that prompted Britain's colonialism and its "White man's Burden", and America's "Manifest Destiny" - the recent invasion and occupation of Czech-Slovakia by the armed forces of the Soviet Union and its lickspittle satellites. That this spectacle of the military jack-boot trampling over its onetime ally was conducted in the name of "Marxism-Leninism" does not make it any less foul or infamous. And the denunciation by America was but an instance of the pot admonishing the kettle. That the U.S. should suddenly discover that the state apparatus of Czech-Slovakia was being administered by "liberals" - Dubcek and Slovoba - leading "their" country to "freedom and democracy" would appear comical were it not so tragic. The apostles of liberty were pressured by the needs of a deteriorating economy and the criticisms of its own students and workers into moving away from the Russian bear, and in the direction of the throbbing economy of West Germany. The economic volcano of the Ruhr Valley was a much better bet than a continued reliance on Moscow.

The Czech ploy to West Germany challenged the Soviet Union: its East European hegemony was threatened, so Socialist troops invaded the territory of a sister "Socialist" state. Were any evidence needed to demonstrate that the State Capitalism of Russia and the "Free Enterprise" of the U.S. are basically similar this invasion, paralleling U.S. action in Santo Domingo should suffice.

Yet, despite all this evidence of the predatory nature of Capitalism, the working force of society, the OPPRESSED of each capitalist state, and the source and creator of all wealth, by and large sees its interest to be ONLY in the maintenance and development of the very system which holds it in bondage.

The possession and control of society's economic machinery is guaranteed by the political institution, the State. With this political control the ruling class possesses also control of the means of communication and information: news media, T.V., and radio, the institutions of education (sic) and the religious apparatus.

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(1.) Antonio Gramsci was a staunch opponent of Mussolini's Fascism. He died in prison a quarter of a century ago.

IDEOLOGY (continued)

By distorting history, pseudo-scientific economics, the "humanistic" hypocritical picture of the nation as one happy family where harmony should prevail and violence be non-existent, the ruling clique is enabled to so indoctrinate the "oppressed" that the notion that here is the best of all possible systems in the best of all possible worlds is held by a majority of the populace. In short: "We never had it so good."

With political power and control of the means of communication - sanctioned by the majority which "shares the fundamental ethos of the oppressors" - in the hands of the minority (ruling class) how can the "repressive effectiveness" of the master class be challenged and negated? The answer lies in convincing the majority that its interests, and in fact that of all society, demands a change in its "ideology," that it must come to see that poverty amidst affluence, continued aggression against small and ill-developed countries containing "valuable" raw materials, etc., shall be brought to an end, and that the "emancipation of all mankind" be achieved through the conquest of political power (now held by the "aggressive minority") by an enlightened majority having undergone an "ideological" revolution. The ideas of this new era will be the ideas of its "majority" made to function in the interest of that majority.

Although the current scene shows today's ideas to be "the ideas of its ruling class," it discloses also other features. It is becoming increasingly apparent that "Capital is its own contradiction," as Marx puts it, and that the contradictions inherent in the system are becoming more obvious as the system develops. This appears to be increasingly evident among today's youth. Confused and perplexed, given to fighting effects rather than searching for and uncovering root causes, frittering away valuable time and energy in demonstrations and protests, the dissident youth today are getting the "new" idea that their masters' (and parents') politics are "phoney" - a sham battle between windy opponents standing basically for the same thing - that the "educational" institutions are also "phoney," designed not to educate but to manufacture cogs for the machinery of the modern industrial complex; and furthermore that their religious mentors are finding it difficult to make their sophistry convincing, that ecclesiastical authority is waning and that the Pope even is caught in the cleft stick between the weight of tradition and the pressure of social needs. In short, today's youth discerns some mighty fractures in the walls of capitalism's Jericho.

What, then, does this rebellion portend? The rebellion of the ghetto youth; the Hippie sub-culture; the questionings of the college students?

While attempting to sympathetically understand these protests no informed socialist would be so naive as to imagine the negative attitude, the turning of the back on society as is done by the Hippies, could seriously develop that dynamic necessary to achieve a social transformation. Or that the understandable defiance of the ghetto, the burning, looting and confrontation with police power could lead in that direction. Or that the hysteria, slogans and demonstrations of students could be counted on. These may leave some impact on the societal superstructure but, nonetheless, cannot produce the necessary basic changes. In the last analysis all this shadow boxing cannot develop a considered and disciplined assault upon capitalism's establishment. What is required is to convince the majority that this system is bankrupt, intellectually and "morally;" that its profit motive must be replaced by a higher social concept: "Production For Use;" that nationalism must give way to the idea of "one human family in one world," and to further demonstrate that none of these concepts and ideas appear in the hysteria and turmoil of the current unrest.

Yet these protesters and demonstrators, mostly young, ARE IN REBELLION against THE ESTABLISHMENT, the "Status Quo."

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IDEOLOGY (continued)

What, then, should be the attitude of the dedicated and informed socialist to this phenomenon - to this evident searching and yearning of modern youth?

First, I think a sympathetic understanding of these problems as the young conceive them is necessary. Then our appeal should be made, devoid even of a mere suggestion of opposition, of aggression or **hostilities**. Rather our stance should be that of a dedicated and patient teacher dealing with an eager, enquiring but frustrated pupil.

Respecting the "Hippies" and their sub-culture, with the "Diggers" attempting to create an "economic sub-system" in which necessary goods would be distributed free, again understanding is required. Not in a reversion to these simple methods of production and distribution but in the realization that the technological machinery of today can more than supply society's needs and that such machinery can become the productive **POWER OF SOCIETY, CONTROLLED BY SOCIETY AND FOR SOCIETY** through the conquest, by an enlightened majority, of political power.

What is now required of socialists is a patient teaching of the nature of capitalism, a clear view of historical development, a critical analysis of the economics of today's system, and a realization that the **REAL** interests of the majority in this society stand in basic opposition to those of the ruling minority.

In an understanding of the system, its workings, and how it is now controlled lies the basis of the road to power and consequent freedom. Not in hysterical demonstrations, the shouting of slogans, the shadow boxing of the protesters can the path be cleared so that the "ideas" ruling society may be superseded by the NEW "ideas" of the enlightened majority.

Not in burning, looting, or leading frustrated dissidents into confrontations with the police power, but in gaining knowledge, wisdom and understanding lies the way to real social progress. Of this we MUST convince the young. This is our clear and present task.

NO LASTING PHYSICAL REVOLUTION OF CONSEQUENCE, IN THE INTEREST OF THE MAJORITY, AND THEREFORE OF ALL MANKIND, CAN OCCUR UNTIL A "REVOLUTION" HAS TAKEN PLACE IN THE "THOUGHT PROCESSES" OF THAT MAJORITY ITSELF.

THE DANGERS OF INFLATION - continued from page 13

"I don't suppose so."

"Would we have sold more goods?"

"Probably not."

"And what would have happened to the difference between our continuing low wages and the continuing high prices?"

"Somebody else woulda got it, I guess."

"The jokers perhaps wo hire experts to tell us about the dangers of inflation?"

"Perhaps."

"I like it better the other way. Gives a guy the price of an emergency at times. Like the present."

"Somehow I feel that way too."

"Here's a likely-looking place. My product. Your treat."

"Dutch treat. To the dangers of inflation!"

W. Z. Miller

Los Angeles

ADDRESS to S.L.I.G. and SOCIALIST FORUM CONFERENCE

The following is a reproduction of an address made by one of the Socialist Companion Party members, W. (Bill) Z. Miller of Los Angeles. As the reader will soon discover, Bill is quite competent at presenting Socialist theory to outsiders. Less known is how vigorous he is at tackling fellow Socialists when they fall into theoretical error. For his efforts we hail him well. ----- Editor

Mr. Chairman:

May I thank the Socialist League for Industrial Government (and its secretary) for inviting me to this conference, as a guest, and allowing me to present the position of The World Socialist Party.

Most of the people present, I understand, have some knowledge of Socialism, through their past association with the S.L.P.I.

In opening may I state that there are points of agreement, aside from the claim of being scientific, revolutionary, and Marxist; but, also, there are some sharp differences.

The World Socialist Party holds that socialists are materialists and therefore cannot be religious.

While we do not endow the Constitution with the sacrosanct glow allowed by the S.L.P.I., we do adopt its first three words: We the People."

"We instead hold that we the people have it in our power (when socialist ideology becomes so pervasive that opposing ideologies are rendered impotent) to make the necessary changes."

Both organizations are in agreement as to the futility of reforms, for we maintain they help to sustain capitalism, which cannot be reformed in the interest of the majority.

As socialists we disagree with the S.L.P. on the "Law of Value". Under the S.L.P. concept of socialism the "Law of Value" retains its capitalist commodity status. "Does human labor incorporated in a article disappear when it ceases to be a commodity - that is, when it is produced for use and not for sale? Obviously not."

They fail to understand that in a socialist society, labor as such becomes a meaningless term. When articles are produced for use, the labor value aspect ceases to exist. They become useful articles for human consumption.

We stand on the Class Struggle and The Material Conception of History.

As socialists, we recognized the Russian Revolution, from its inception to be pro-capitalist and nationalist; that it swept away the semi-feudalism of Czarist Russia; and that the material conditions, in so backward an economy, were not developed to the point where the establishment of any society carrying socialist characteristics was possible. Russia now exhibits the social relationship of state capitalism. Its system is exploitative, and can be described in Marx' words, (Capital, Vol I): "The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as an immense accumulation of commodities..."

But a vast theoretical corpus has been produced, and inflicted on the world, to attempt to justify Russia's exploitative system.

ADDRESS to S.L.I.C. and SOCIALIST FORUM CONFERENCE (Continued)

Nationalization of Industry is described as Socialist Progress; Economic Planning the cure for Crises; increasing production figures synonymous with the well-being of Russian workers. Meanwhile facts clash with this rosy picture.

Objective and systematic accounts have been available for sometime, yet a marked failure to employ them adequately for the purpose of generalization must be noted.

Russian State Capitalism has developed a corps of unscrupulous and aggressive propagandists, attempting to "prove" it to be a socialist society, and in so doing making use of Marxian terminology.

The absence of "real" thinking is reversed when one is confronted with the ideas of these apologists to economics, politics, culture and, very often, science.

Despite the vulgar prattle issued in praise of Russian Socialism, voices of protest can be heard against this bureaucratic absolutism, and its distortions of history. To these distortions one must add the propaganda of the communist parties (silent on Stalin terrorism). They serve this exploitative Russian system faithfully, justifying every devious turn and twist the bureaucracy is compelled to take.

The basic and primary distinction between "our" two organizations is the DIFFERENCE in OBJECTIVES. If the S.L.P., and the World Socialist Party had similar "goals", there would be no valid reason for two parties.

What gives title and deed of ownership? The state, the CENTRAL organ of power. The highest expression of the class struggle is the political phase. The limitations of the economic phase should be obvious to any serious minded student.

A class conscious worker works for, and VOTES only for a wageless, moneyless, profitless, classless and stateless world. His main job herein, and here-and now, is to help produce that class conscious majority already referred to. This is primary. First class conscious socialists - then ways and means will be found. Let us not put the cart before the horse. Let us try to MAKE Socialists.

The object of the World Socialist Party is: "The establishment of a system of society where the entire economy is administered democratically in the interest of the entire community."

The object of the S.L.P. is: "To inaugurate the Socialist Republic of Labor."

In this Industrial Republic of Labor, workers cast ballots for a gradation of councils, from a plant council to a local Industry council to a National Industrial Union Congress composed of manufacture, public service, construction, food supply, lumber, farming and transportation. It also includes wages of a sort in the form of labor vouchers which represent the "full" product of the worker's toil.

All of these characteristics are but extensions of capitalist relationships, albeit with a new label. There is, in this, no relationship to Socialism.

The concept of Socialism held by the Companion Parties of The World Socialist Movement is a society made possible and practical, and NECESSARY, TODAY-here and now. It is but the development of capitalism's potential made to function, not for profit, but for social use. The basic problem of production has been solved - a potential abundance prevails. If this were not so, the material conditions would not be ripe for Socialism. Socialism can only be a product of social development. It is not a "utopia", nor can blueprints be made for it.

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ADDRESS to S.L.I.G. and SOCIALIST FORUM CONFERENCE (continues)

"Marx never denies that further developments may occur under socialism, and therefore he never believes in a static, absolutizing blueprint for the socialist Society. He contends only that, once the distinct political element has been abolished, the disturbing effects of further development could be neutralized in class terms so that no new tension between the content of social life and its form would arise. It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that SOCIAL EVOLUTIONS will cease to be political revolutions." (The Poverty of Philosophy - quoted from "The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx - Shlomo Avineri - P. 237).

The times are NOW propitious. It is NOW possible for a society in which each one may live a useful, interesting and meaningful life - "From each to the best of his ability and to each according to his needs." The problem is not one of organizing the productive forces but to develop the enjoyment of genuine and material leisure. Socialists, as social being, democratically come to grips with problems as they arise because they are imbued with a sense of common interests. Socialism is an administration of affairs conducted democratically by the members of society.

Equally quixotic is the Socialist Labor Party's stress on LABOR in a socialist society. Labor, as such, in describing socialist relationships, is a term shorn of meaning. The Industrial Republic of Labor cannot be anything more than "sounder" union tactics, within the framework of capitalism.

What stands in the way of socialism today? Not the material conditions of existence or the limitations of technology. It is not the lack of literacy, scientific information or democratic forms. The one thing lacking is a MAJORITY of class-conscious persons determined to bring it about. To develop such class conscious majority is the task before the Socialist Movement. In this work our greatest ally is the Capitalist system itself with the working out and conflicts of its own inherent contradictions.

Once the workers become imbued with socialist ideas they have a ready tool close to hand, the ballot. Yet with socialist knowledge sufficiently pervasive whatever means the majority may consider necessary that majority will have the will and intelligence to create.

"The day will come when class conscious workers through the agency of their organization (political party) will send their delegates to the seats of power, backed by that ideology which has then become sufficiently pervasive."

Over the years a misconception has been cultivated that "without the industrial might and organization, the political vote would be nothing." This ignores the fundamental socialist concept that no government can impose its WILL upon a consciously willing and determined class conscious socialist majority, fully aware of its status, as members of a class and aware of the needs of that class.

Can one conceive of a worker outside his factory, office, laboratory, etc., conscious of his class interests, losing this consciousness upon entering his place of employment?

Vast numbers of workers are today organized in unions, after a fashion, but lack the necessary socialist consciousness. What strength, industrially, does the worker have? He may starve, or work under conditions set by the world market generally and enforced by the power of the state.

Larry Tickner

Victoria, B.C.

HOW TO CATCH A KILAMAZOO (Pritchard's Address to the Jury)

Ironically the levity of the back page characterization was lifted from the solemnity of the Winnipeg Strike trials. The writer might be accused of frivolity but when he came across this when reviewing Pritchard's notable address to the jury he just couldn't help himself.

THE KILAMAZOO STORY

In ridiculing the case for the Crown the following story was told:

It seems a certain ferry boat passenger roused the curiosity of his fellow passengers by continually snapping shut the lid of a wooden box.

Eventually he could no longer resist their persistent questioning. So with sinister secrecy he revealed that what he had in the box was the first ever to be captured, a deadly fierousious Kilamazoo and that if it were to escape there would be great loss of life. All the passengers fled except one who enquired further, "What do you feed it?"

"That," replied the owner of the box, "is my greatest problem. All its life in the wilds of Africa it has lived on snakes and gorillas. It will have no other food. Fortunately I have an alcoholic brother. Every day or two when he has hallucinations and sees things like baboons and boa constrictors I capture them and feed them to my Kilamazoo."

"But," said the questioner, "those are imaginary creatures. You can't feed it them."

"Well," said the owner of the box "since you are so persistent, what I have in the box is an imaginary Kilamazoo."

So, it was analogized, the crown council was trying to terrify us with an imaginary Kilamazoo.

PRITCHARD SPEAKS UP FOR THE WORKING CLASS

The Kilamazoo Story set a good mood for the indicted workers who presented their own defence. The most notable and the one who presently attracts our attention was W.A. (Bill) Pritchard, who addressed the jury for two long days from 10 A.M. til 10 P.M. each day. Anyone reading Pritchard's Address to the Jury must be struck with the impression that Bill was quite aware of the importance of the episode. He might have justifiably attempted to excuse himself on the grounds that he wasn't even in Winnipeg when the Strike began but it must have been obvious that these working men were convicted even before they arrived in the court room.

Pritchard defended not himself, but trade unionism and the right to hold and expound Socialist ideas for that was what the trial was actually about. These men were indicted for what they read thought and said. Bill's whole address sparkled with wit and the knowledge of a well grounded student of Marx who would not be daunted by a hostile judge. At one point Pritchard attempted to use the Encyclopaedia Britannica as a reference. He was stopped by the judge on an infinitesimally fine point. Which is all the more strange when "His Lordship" allowed the prosecutor to use the Bible because "...its so interesting".

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HOW TO CATCH A KILLERZOO (continued)

ONE YEAR FOR UTTERING SEDITIOUS WORDS

Ultimately Capitalism's justice prevailed and Pritchard and his colleagues were sent to Stoney Mountain Prison for one year. Even in prison these men were active. Classes in Marxian economics were conducted. In lighter moments Pritchard, who had previously been quite active in choral groups, co-operated with his fellow prisoners to put on Gilbert and Sullivan musicals. Pritchard was put to work in the Prison Library and in such position made the effort to teach one of the inmates how to read and write.

When these men were sent to work on the prison grounds they amply demonstrated that they were better men by far than the ones who had sent them there. For example a rail car in the prison was unfit for service. Johns, who is presently retired in Victoria, and was a first class machinist, made new bearings for it in the prison shop.

FIFTY YEARS LATER

Although there were notable number of Socialists amongst these men and they all emerged from prison as working class heroes. The Socialist Party of Canada did not advance. Rather, within a few years it declined into oblivion until it was refounded in 1931.

The trade unions on the other hand gained immensely. They attained legal status and the right of collective bargaining.

Of the men involved, only Johns, who is very ill, and Pritchard are still alive. Pritchard is now 81. He lives modestly on the old age pension in Los Angeles. He is still an active Socialist writer and on a recent visit to Victoria he proved himself still to be an excellent speaker.

And how are these men regarded by the trade union movement they served so well? The Canadian section of the United Steelworkers are to be commended. They devoted a special May 1969 issue to the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike. In addition they invited Bill Pritchard to their Toronto Convention to which due to the fragility of his years and the winter weather he regretfully declined. And the Victoria Labor Council paid tribute with a reception for Pritchard when he visited here. But this occasion and these men should have been recognized by the Canadian Labor Congress. Admittedly the C.L.C. did send belated greetings to Pritchard but even this had to be tainted with an unwitting insult by a C.L.C. official no doubt from an abysmal ignorance of labor history. The telegram was addressed to Bill Fritchett. (1.)

What may seem a paradox is that while Labor ignores the Stalwarts of yesterday it is the academics, writers and university that are working to put these men in the history books and are doing what Pritchard predicted they would do fifty years ago: Driving "... the knife of critical research deep into the bowels of the boggy..." that was created by yesterday's lackies of the capitalist class.

When Pritchard visited here never a word of bitterness was heard from him. As a comrade at less than half Bill's age this writer cannot be so kind and cannot help but reflect that when our top ranking pork-choppers are wining and dining and addressing the Canadian Club they don't even remember the names of those who made it safe for them to collect our dues.

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(1.) Harold Fritchett was a Comical (member of the Communist Party)

Jim Milne

Winnipeg

"THE DANGERS OF INFLATION"

Two old friends met on the street and walked along together locked in animated conversation. They covered all the important subjects - women and hockey and whiskey and women and hockey and whiskey and women - then somehow found themselves sidetracked.

"So you don't know nothing about inflation, eh?" said one. "Then I'll explain it to you. You work on a job and you produce goods. Right?"

"I work on the railway. I don't produce nothing," said the other.

"You produce transportation. But it don't matter where you work. Let's say you work in a brewery and you produce beer. O.K.?"

"O.K."

"So you produce beer for the market."

"I produce beer for wages."

"But you don't get no wages if the beer don't get to the market. Any dimwit can see that."

"O.K. I can see it."

"So when I want a bottle of beer I go to the market and figure where I can get it cheapest."

"You go to the nearest pub, like I do. Beer's the same price at all of them."

"I was speaking figuratively. What I was saying about beer applies to the whole world of goods. Shut up, if you want to learn something."

"O.K."

"So I go to the market and look over the different brands."

"And chisel a spoonful here and there."

"Maybe. Point is, I'm searching out the cheapest product."

"The crummiest brew."

"No. The responsible buyer compares the prices of all the brands of uniform quality and buys the cheapest."

"You've been reading the Horatio Alger column."

"Now see what happens. The goods that sell the cheapest are sold and the dear goods stay on the market. That's what we mean when we speak of the dangers of inflation."

"That's what we mean, is it?"

"Well, the experts mean it. And if we allow our prices to go too high our goods stay unsold on the market. We have priced ourselves out of it. Our factories slow down or stop and you don't produce no more beer."

"Is this happening now?"

"No, but it will happen if we don't try to check it."

"And how do we check it?"

"The experts say we gotta tighten our belts. We gotta be more moderate in our wage demands so prices can be kept reasonable. We can't take more out of the pot than we put into it."

"Sounds chummy, don't it?"

"Of course."

"When will we reach the point where we're taking more outa the pot, or when we're pricing ourselves outa the market?"

"They don't say. But they know it's gonna happen."

"I remember the experts telling us about the dangers of inflation twenty-five years ago. Suppose we at that time had said 'O.K., we'll work for chicken feed,' would that have kept prices down?"

"I don't suppose so."

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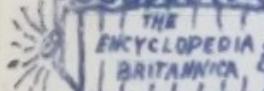
KILLAMAZOO - continued from page 12

In calmer moments solice is derived from the recognition that the final battle is yet to be won and not on the trade union front but on the political front when the productive forces are owned and operated by and in the interests of all mankind.

ACCEPTABLE!
"It's SO interesting;"

NOT ADMISSIBLE

"It may lend
authority to the
SUBJECT!"



HOW TO CATCH A KILAMAZOO

+ SEP STORY PAGE 11

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